

Ashkelon

12 miles north of Gaza and 32 miles south of Joppa. One of the five leading Philistine cities mentioned in the Bible: Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gaza, Gath. Philistines settled on the coastal plain 1200 BC. The name Ashkelon comes from the word "shekel" since Ashkelon was a major trading center located on the international highway (see back pages of this book). It was 150 acres, the largest of the Philistines' cities and the only one built on the coast due to sand.



In the 1880's Lady Hester Stanhope began excavation. Lawrence Stager with Harvard University began excavating Ashkelon in 1985. Civilizations beginning with the Neolithic Age (8300-4500 BC) have been uncovered.

In the Bible: **Judges 1:18**, Judah captured, but lost Ashkelon; **Judges 14:19**, Samson killed 30 men from Ashkelon and took their clothes to pay a gambling debt; **1 Samuel 6:17**, provided a gold rat and a gold hemorrhoid along with the other four cities; **2 Samuel 1:20** – David's lyrics asked that Saul and Jonathan's death not be announced in Ashkelon's streets; **Amos 1:8**, Ashkelon is rebuked by Amos for selling Israelites into slavery.



The sloped wall of the rampart called a glaciis would have supported a large city wall. Mediterranean Sea in back.



Toni stands by the dark mud bricks of the Philistine gate. The lighter colored bricks are reconstruction.